

Competition Policy and Law set up under the Chairmanship of Shri S.V.S. Raghavan.

- (ii) An institutional Structure to regulate competition was set up in the form of Competition Commission of India (CCI). However, certain provisions of the Act were challenged before the Supreme Court in 2003 as a result of which CCI could not be made fully functional. The Apex Court has since delivered its Judgement in the matter. Keeping in view the judgement of the Apex court a Bill, the Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2006, suggesting amendments to the Competition Act, 2002 was introduced in Lok Sabha on 9th March, 2006. The Bill has been referred to the Standing Committee on Finance. After the Amendment Bill is passed by the Parliament, the full functioning of the Commission would be facilitated.
- (iii) With a view to promoting competition in the market place, activities such as competition advocacy, creating awareness about competition issues and capacity building of stakeholders have also been initiated.

Insurance cover to people over 55 years

*296. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority plans to make it not mandatory for insurers to service people over 55 years;

(b) whether general insurance companies have already been going slow or even denying health covers for people over 55 years by disincentivising agents who sell the policies or simply rejecting such requests;

(c) whether the premium costs for 55 years and above is already 60 percent higher than what a 30 year old has to pay; and

(d) if so, whether the senior citizens will be totally deprived of healthcare cover?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir. Insurers do provide medical cover to people over 55 years of age subject to the exclusion of pre-existing diseases and conditions, and on payment of required premium.

(b) General Insurers' (Public Sector) Association of India (GIPSA) has reported that public sector companies are neither going slow nor denying health cover to people over 55 years. However, in view of high claim ratio in the age group of 55 years and above, the commission payable to agents has been reduced by one public sector company as a measure to reduce the total outgo. Insurers have also been advised by Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) to ensure that servicing of existing policy holders is not affected in any manner by a change in the commission structure.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The premium under the existing Mediciam policy for persons above 55 years of age is higher by 60% or more as compared to premium for persons below 35 years. Under Mediciam policy, people above 45 years of age have to undergo health check-up before acceptance of the proposal. Renewal of policy (without break) upto the age of 80 years is accepted without any health check-up. Insurers have also started devising specific health insurance covers for senior citizens. One such cover has been launched recently by the National Insurance Company Limited for persons above the age of 60 years.

Tax Return Preparer Scheme

*297. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA:
SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have entered into arrangement with certain private organisations who will provide training to unemployed/ underemployed Graduates to make them as Tax Return Preparers;

(b) if so, the salient details of the said agreement entered with the private organisations, including the total cost of training to be paid to them, and the salient features of the proposed training scheme; and

(c) the details of the procedure followed and exercises made by Government in selecting these private organisations for the purpose of rendering training and entering agreement with them?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. The Union Government has launched the Tax Return Preparers Scheme